



## South Carolina DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Hugh E. Weathers, Commissioner

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### **Going Organic? Cost Share Grant Can Help Farmers, Food Processors**

**COLUMBIA** – South Carolina farmers and food processors who want to pursue organic certification may qualify for reimbursement through a grant administered by the South Carolina Department of Agriculture.

“These organic cost share grants are a valuable tool for farmers looking to expand to new markets,” said Commissioner of Agriculture Hugh Weathers. “SCDA is happy to help ease the financial burden of organic certification for South Carolina agribusinesses.”

Eric McClam is co-owner of the Columbia farm City Roots, which participated in the reimbursement program in previous years.

“The organic cost share reimbursement makes getting certified organic more financially achievable for all types and sizes of farmers,” McClam said. “It has allowed us to recoup the costs associated with organic certification, which we in turn utilize to produce more food for our community in South Carolina.”

The Organic Certification Cost Share Program will reimburse producers and handlers of agricultural products up to 75 percent of the operation’s total allowable certification costs, up to a maximum of \$750 per certification scope: crops, livestock, wild crops, and handling (i.e., processing). The deadline to apply for reimbursement for the current fiscal year is October 31, 2019.

SCDA also has three other cost share reimbursement programs available as projects of the USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant Program, including one that offsets the cost of installing an affordable Cool Bot cold storage unit; and two that support businesses through the Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) Audit process.

To apply for reimbursement programs through SCDA, visit [agriculture.sc.gov/divisions/agency-operations/grants](http://agriculture.sc.gov/divisions/agency-operations/grants).

#### *About the South Carolina Department of Agriculture:*

Agribusiness is South Carolina’s largest industry, with more than 24,000 farms and a \$41.7 billion economic impact each year. The SC Department of Agriculture promotes and nurtures South Carolina agriculture and its related businesses while assuring the safety and security of the buying public.

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